Bhubaneswar Airport as an International Airport

*293. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the historical heritage of Orissa is one of the most sought after religious hubs in the world and the Biju Patnaik Airport Bhubaneswar fulfills all the requisites of an international airport;

(b) whether the State Government has requested for declaring this airport as an international airport so that it can receive international flights and also chartered flights to promote international tourism; and

(c) if so, what is the status of the proposal and the time-frame within which it would be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. It is all known fact that historical heritage of Orissa is one of the most sought after religious hubs in the world. Biju Patnaik Airport at Bhubaneswar can be considered as an International airport whenever it fulfills all the requirements such as runway length, Customs, Immigration facilities and firm commitment of commercial airlines to start international operations.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Orissa has requested to declare Bhubaneshwar Airport as an International airport. However, there is no request from any national or foreign airline to introduce direct international flights from Bhubaneshwar airport at present. Therefore, there is no proposal to declare Bhubaneshwar airport as an International airport, at present.

Sale of LPG at unsubsidised prices

*294. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received from Government owned oil companies seeking permission to sell Liquefied Petroleum Gas at unsubsidised prices to rich and middle class households;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) At present, subsidised domestic LPG is marketed by the distributors of the four Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and IBP Company Limited. Domestic LPG is partly subsidized by the Government and partly by the oil companies. During the year 2004-05, the total subsidy burden was Rs. 9830 crores. This Ministry has recently written to the State Governments seeking their views on restricting the subsidy on domestic LPG to only BPL families.

The Government has also recently allowed Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Gas Authority India Limited (GAIL) to market LPG produced by their fractionators subject to certain terms and conditions. With a view to operationalizing the mechanism, the matter was recently reviewed in the Ministry and ONGC and GAIL were asked to give their proposals. The proposals received from them are under examination in the Ministry.

Overhauling of ATC system

*295. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that appropriate measures have been taken to overhaul the Air Traffic Control system to remove congestion at the Airports minimizing thereby the waiting period to get all clear signals to land at the Airports;

(b) if so, whether such an exercise will also be done at Nagpur Airport which of late is experiencing greater air traffic; and

(c) what is the time-frame in covering all Airports in the country for this type of overhaul?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL RATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The presjent equipment at Nagpur is adequate to handle the current traffic.